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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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Washington, DC 20536



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

FILE:

Office: California Service Center

Date: **MAR 22 2004**

IN RE:

Applicant:

APPLICATION:

Application for Temporary Protected Status under Section 244 of the Immigration
and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1254

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

Self-represented

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

Cinder N. Gomez for

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, California Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant is a native and citizen of El Salvador who is seeking Temporary Protected Status (TPS) under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1254. The director denied the application because the applicant failed to establish he had: 1) continuously resided in the United States since February 13, 2001; and 2) been continuously physically present in the United States since March 9, 2001.

On appeal, the applicant asserted his claim of eligibility for TPS and submitted evidence in support of his claim.

Section 244(c) of the Act, and the related regulations in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2, provide that an applicant who is a national of a foreign state is eligible for temporary protected status only if such alien establishes that he or she:

- (a) is a national of a state designated under section 244(b) of the Act;
- (b) has been continuously physically present in the United States since the effective date of the most recent designation of that foreign state;
- (c) has continuously resided in the United States since such date as the Attorney General may designate;
- (d) is admissible as an immigrant under section 244.3;
- (e) is not ineligible under 8 C.F.R. § 244.4; and
- (f)
 - (1) registers for TPS during the initial registration period, or
 - (2) registers for TPS during any subsequent extension of such designation, if the applicant meets the above listed requirements and:
 - (i) the applicant is a nonimmigrant or has been granted voluntary departure status or any relief from removal;
 - (ii) the applicant has an application for change of status, adjustment of status, asylum, voluntary departure, or any relief from removal which is pending or subject to further review or appeal;
 - (iii) the applicant is a parolee or has a pending request for reparole; or
 - (iv) the applicant is a spouse or child of an alien currently eligible to be a TPS registrant.

The phrase continuously physically present, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means actual physical presence in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous physical presence in the United States by virtue of brief, casual, and innocent absences as defined within this section.

The phrase continuously resided, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means residing in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous residence in the United States by reason of a brief, casual and innocent absence as defined within this section or due merely to a brief temporary trip abroad required by emergency or extenuating circumstances outside the control of the alien.

The phrase brief, casual, and innocent absence, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means a departure from the United States that satisfies the following criteria:

- (1) Each such absence was of short duration and reasonably calculated to accomplish the purpose(s) for the absence;
- (2) The absence was not the result of an order of deportation, an order of voluntary departure, or an administrative grant of voluntary departure without the institution of deportation proceedings; and
- (3) The purposes for the absence from the United States or actions while outside of the United States were not contrary to law.

Persons applying for TPS offered to El Salvadorans must demonstrate entry on or prior to February 13, 2001, continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001. On July 9, 2002, the Attorney General announced an extension of the TPS designation until September 9, 2003. A subsequent extension of the TPS designation has been granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, with validity until March 9, 2005, upon the applicant's re-registration during the requisite time period.

The burden of proof is upon the applicant to establish that he or she meets the above requirements. Applicants shall submit all documentation as required in the instructions or requested by CIS. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a). The sufficiency of all evidence will be judged according to its relevancy, consistency, credibility, and probative value. To meet his or her burden of proof the applicant must provide supporting documentary evidence of eligibility apart from his or her own statements. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b).

The applicant had submitted the following documentation along with his initial application for TPS received on May 17, 2002:

1. A copy of his birth certificate in Spanish along with an English language translation.
2. Copies of two of his student identification cards from the Evans Adult School with a validity date of June 30, 1997 and June 30, 1999.
3. A copy of his public transportation student identification card issued March 1, 1997 and valid through the month of October 1997.
4. A copy of a receipt from RIA Envía dated March 25, 2002.

5. A copy of the Employee's Claim for Workers Compensation Benefits indicating the date of injury as July 4, 1997.

On December 18, 2002, the applicant was requested to submit evidence establishing his residence since February 13, 2001, and physical presence since March 9, 2001, in the United States. The applicant was also requested to submit copies of the biographical pages of his passport and a copy of his national identification card. The applicant, in response, provided the following documentation:

6. A copy of an envelope addressed to the Immigration and Naturalization Service stamped April 8, 2002.
7. A copy of his Employment Authorization Card valid from September 10, 2002 to September 9, 2003.

The applicant also resubmitted copies of Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5 above.

The director determined that the applicant had failed to submit sufficient evidence to establish his eligibility for TPS and denied the application on May 2, 2003. On appeal, the applicant reasserted his claim and submitted the following documentation:

8. Copies of hand-written receipts from Rajabi Electronics dated February 2, 2001 and March 5, 2001.
9. Copies of hand-written rent receipts dated January 6, 2001 and February 6, 2001.

The photocopied rent payment receipts detailed in No. 9 above appear to have been altered as the original dates seem to have been covered-over and changed to reflect the year "2001". In addition, the receipts detailed in No. 8 above reflect a numbered sequence differing only by one number over a period of one month.

Doubt cast on any aspect of the applicant's proof may lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence offered in support of the application. It is incumbent upon the applicant to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence, and attempts to explain or reconcile such inconsistencies, absent competent objective evidence pointing to where the truth, in fact, lies, will not suffice. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582 (BIA 1988).

The applicant has failed to submit any objective evidence to explain or justify the apparent alterations of the documents in No. 9 above. Therefore, the reliability of the remaining evidence offered by the applicant is suspect and it must be concluded that the applicant has failed to satisfy the residence and physical presence requirements described in 8 C.F.R. §§ 244.2(b) and (c). Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application for temporary protected status will be affirmed.

It is also noted that the applicant was apprehended by the United States Border Patrol, El Centro, California, on May 2, 1996, under the record A74 362 601.

An alien applying for temporary protected status has the burden of proving that he or she meets the requirements enumerated above and is otherwise eligible under the provisions of section 244 of the Act. The applicant has failed to meet this burden.


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ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.